

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY ROME IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 250983

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS:ETRD, EAGR

SUBJECT: WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE -- FOLLOW-UP ON FOOD

RESERVES AND GRAIN EXPORTERS GROUPS

REF: ROME 15589

1. REFTEL PROVIDES USEFUL SUMMARY OF IMMEDIATE ISSUES CONFRONTING US WITH RESPECT TO FOLLOW-UP ON SECRETARY KISSINGER'S NOVEMBER 5 PROPOSALS AT WFC CONCERNING AN EXPORT PLANNING GROUP AND A RESERVES COORDINATING GROUP. USDEL SHOULD CONTINUE TO REPORT PROMPTLY REACTIONS OF OTHER DELEGATIONS TO THESE PROPOSALS.

2. WE ARE ANXIOUS TO MOVE FORWARD RAPIDLY WITH FIRST MEETING OF RESERVES COORDINATING GROUP, BUT ARE EquALLY CONCERNED THAT THIS FIRST MEETING BE A CONSTRUCTIVE ONE. FURTHERMORE, AS WE SEE TIMING HERE, IT IS STRONGLY PREFERABLE THAT MEETING OF EXPORT PLANNING GROUP BE HELD IN ADVANCE OF RESERVE COORDINATING GROUP. BECAUSE OF THE NEED FOR COUNTRIES PARTICIPATING IN THE EXPORTERS MEETING

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TO HAVE RESULTS OF EXPORTERS' MEETING CONSIDERED BY THEIR

GOVERNMENTS, IT WOULD PROBABLY NOT REPEAT NOT BE ADVISABLE TO HOLD BACK-TO-BACK EXPORTERS MEETING AND RESERVES CO-ORDINATING GROUP.

3. UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, USG WOULD FAVOR FOLLOWING

SCENARIO: (A) MEETING OF EXPORTERS PLANNING GROUP IN WASHINGTON. (US, AS INITIATOR OF GROUP, WOULD HOST) IN SECOND WEEK IN DECEMBER; (B) MEETING OF RESERVES CO-ORDINATING GROUP IN JANUARY IN LONDON. RESERVES GROUP WOULD MEET INITIALLY UNDER AUSPICES OF IWC. FOR CONVENIENCE OF US AND OTHER PARTICIPANTS, MEETING MIGHT BE HELD EITHER IMMEDIATELY BEFORE OR AFTER SPECIAL IWC MEETING TO CONSIDER EXTENSION OF INTERNATIONAL WHEAT AGREEMENT, WHICH IS NOW APPARENT WILL BE REQUIRED EARLY IN THE YEAR.

4. WASHINGTON MEETING OF EXPORTERS GROUP WOULD BE CALLED TO DISCUSS IMPLEMENTATION OF WFC DECISIONS. MAJOR EXPORTERS HAVE RESPONSIBILITY FOR TAKING LEAD. SPECIFICALLY WE WOULD EXPECT TO COORDINATE VIEWS ON RESERVES SCHEME AND FOOD AID AS WELL AS PRODUCTION POLICIES FOR COMING YEAR AND STATE OF CROP IN SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE COUNTRIES.

5. US TENTATIVELY HAS IN MIND FOLLOWING COMPOSITION FOR TWO GROUPS (A) EXPORTERS PLANNING GROUP -- US, CANADA, AUSTRALIA, ARGENTINA. EC IS ALSO A POSSIBILITY, SINCE IT IS A MAJOR EXPORTER AS WELL AS IMPORTER, ALTHOUGH THEY HAVE NOT NORMALLY MET IN PAST WITH FIRST FOUR COUNTRIES MENTIONED TO DISCUSS PRODUCER PROBLEMS. (B) RESERVES CO-ORDINATING GROUP -- SAME AS PREVIOUS, PLUS EC, JAPAN, BRAZIL, EGYPT, INDIA, PAKISTAN, BANGLADESH, SOVIET UNION, PRC, THAILAND.

6. AS IS CLEAR FROM ABOVE, DEPT. REMAINS INTERESTED IN PURSUING FORCEFULLY CONCEPT OF EXPORTERS GROUP CONSULTATIONS ON MAJOR PRODUCTION, RESERVE AND INVESTMENT QUESTIONS FOR REASONS STATED IN SECRETARY'S SPEECH. IF REACTIONS FROM OTHER EXPORTERS CONTINUE TO BE NEGATIVE, WE WILL NEED TO KNOW THIS SO THAT WE CAN FOLLOW-CONFIDENTIAL

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UP IN CAPITALS. KISSINGER

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